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Bulletin—

of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

Number 36

4th Quarter
1958

146 Queen Victoria Street London EC4

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Individual copies ..	..	1/6 (British)
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Subscribers are requested to pay these amounts or the equivalent value to the office of their national Bible Society (see list inside back cover)

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

FOURTH QUARTER - 1958

The Bible in the Near East

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Editorial

THE NEAR EAST has been much in our thoughts lately. This issue of the BULLETIN had been planned long before the present crisis. The recent political events are only the outward manifestation of an evolution which could not escape the notice of anyone who had had some closer contact with the situation and with the people in those areas.

But for Bible Society people it was clear also, at the same time, that the political evolution would also have a decisive importance for the future of Bible Society work in the area. For that reason, a few years ago, plans had been laid down for the organisation of a regional conference in 1957 or 1958. Political events during the past twenty-four months necessarily led to a postponement of any gathering of that kind.

The present issue of the BULLETIN purports to be nothing more than a contribution towards a realistic examination of the prospects of indigenous Bible Society work in the area. One of the basic aims of the whole Bible Society movement is to see the work rooted in the life of the churches and the people. This is far from having been the case in Bible lands up to now. Yet, unless the work is supported locally and either loses or absorbs whatever "western" features it may be considered to have assumed, all further progress in it may be hindered.

The various articles which describe the place the Bible has in the historic churches of the Near East give us some idea of the extent to which the liturgical life of those churches is rooted in the Scriptures. To some this may appear as if the Scripture was looked upon as a cistern of still water, rather than as living water flowing freely, from which all aspects of life, individual and congregational, are nourished. Yet indications are not lacking in this issue of the BULLETIN that a new attitude may be slowly dawning, in which the use of the Scriptures might become a more central and active concern even among groups of Christians where the wider use and distribution of the Scriptures has been regarded with caution and even with suspicion. Indeed, the fact that such a series of articles as these could be planned, and almost completely received, is in itself a hopeful sign.

What Dr. Cragg says about the encounter with Islam also shows us that the Bible has its place in that confrontation and that the Bible Societies, in spite of many difficulties, should not fail, in their efforts at the missionary circulation of the Scriptures, continually to renew and improve their methods of presenting the Word of God to people in those areas, to whom the hope of God is to be made known. Indeed, the active co-operation of all the churches of the area is needed in the effective discharge of the responsibility of witnessing to Christ among non-Christians. That is one of the reasons why the Bible Societies seek also the full co-operation of the historic churches in that aspect of the evangelistic ministry of the Church, which they have been called upon to assume on behalf of and in the service of all churches.

Recent events have prevented some of the writers from letting us have their papers in time. This accounts for some gaps, particularly with reference to articles on the attitude of various churches towards the Bible and its use. Furthermore, this series, being a first attempt, several articles included here were bound to remain somewhat superficial and slightly out of focus. Nevertheless, the texts which follow provide the reader with sufficiently adequate lines of perspective to enable him to locate some of the difficulties which lie in the path of Bible Society work in these areas.

Bible work remains hard and difficult in the Near East. The trend of political evolution creates for it new problems and new conditions. These are hardly more favourable for the work than the previous ones. At any rate, they challenge all churches and Christian groups in the area, as well as the Bible Societies, to give fresh consideration to the whole question of Scripture production and circulation, its organisation and its methods. They challenge us too, all of us who are concerned that every man should be enabled to purchase and read the Word of God, to pray more faithfully than ever that God's wisdom may be given to those in charge of the work in those areas who are confronted with such heart-searching problems, and for more servants of the Word in that field which is still waiting for a richer out-pouring of the living waters of the Gospel and for which we cannot ignore our present responsibility.

O.B.

The Bible in the Armenian Church

I

Tavit Sahagian

READINGS FROM THE BIBLE hold an important place in the Armenian Church service throughout the year, where at the canonical hours of prayer services, 1650 Bible lessons are read. This number does not include the readings of Bible passages during services of baptism, marriage, burial, and many other rites and ceremonies that are not connected with the canonical hours.

On feast days, when comparatively more people attend church, the readings are more numerous than on ordinary days or fast days. During the fifty days period of Easter 507 passages are read during the Church services, an average of eight passages a day. There are only four days in the year when the Bible is not read in the Church. On Good Friday 33 passages have been ordained to be read. An average of 15 passages are read on each of the six great feast days of the Church. Almost all the books of the New Testament are read in their entirety each year. Many Gospel lessons are repeated many times and some of them are repeated as many as a hundred times during the year.

The following books are never read :— Philemon, The Revelation, Judges, Ruth, I Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. The Psalms of course are not read as lessons. They are either sung or recited as part of the offices.

The proportion of the number of New Testament lessons read during the offices to that of the Old Testament lessons is three to one.

The fact, however, that the Bible is extensively read in the church, does not in itself mean that knowledge of the Scriptures is adequately spread among the people of the Church or that the Word of God makes an impact on the people through the readings in the church. For one thing, very few people attend the services during the week. Those who are habitual church-goers attend the services only on Sundays and on feast days.

Secondly, the Bible lessons in the church are read, except in rare instances, in the ancient classical Armenian, which is properly understood by but few of the members of the congregations attending Church services.

The important place of and the frequency of the Scripture lessons in the Armenian Church services, however, point up the fact that the Church does impress upon its members the necessity and the vital importance of hearing or reading the Holy Scriptures for the health and the salvation of their souls. It is an historical as well as an actual fact that the Armenian Church has always and insistently encouraged the reading of the Scriptures by its people. Indeed, Armenian literature throughout, from the beginning to the present time, has been infused with the knowledge of the Scriptures. In the fifth century an Armenian Church Council, attended by the clergy and lay leaders alike, wrote to the Persian Emperor, who wanted to eradicate Christianity from Armenia, "We recognize the gospels as our father, and the apostolic Catholic Church as our mother". The commanders of Armenian soldiers used to read the Scriptures to their men before going into battle. References by Armenian historians throughout the centuries to the knowledge and use of the Holy Scriptures by the Armenian people at least testify to the indubitable and impressive fact that the Church armed with the Bible, as the "Sword of the Spirit", is able to lead the people and to defend the faith.

Although both the Bible lessons and the divine liturgy are as a rule read during the services in the classical and ancient Armenian, yet it should be stressed that the classical Armenian is not entirely incomprehensible to the common people in the congregation attending the Sunday services.

An Armenian worshipper who speaks and reads the current vernacular, is able to grasp the general sense of the lesson read. The difference between the classical and modern Armenian is comparable to the difference between the New Testament Greek and Modern Greek.

The ceremonial veneration accorded to the Bible and especially to the Gospels Book during the services, impresses the mind of the orthodox worshipper with the sacredness and the divine nature of the Word of God. The Gospels Book is bound in silver and gold. It is devoutly kissed and is solemnly elevated during the divine liturgy and people bow before it. It is used by the Priest to bless the people, by making with it the sign of the cross over the congregation. The Gospels Book is handled with a special linen, the sudarium, because it is holy and must not be touched like an ordinary object. The Bible lessons in the church are always read by the priest or deacon vested with a cope in the case of a priest and with a dalmatic in the case of a deacon or clerk. Always two tapers are held on either side of the Gospel Book when it is in the church, and the deacon censes it before and after it is read. This elaborate ritual veneration of the Gospels Book bespeaks of the holiness and the power which the church sees in the Word of God.

The complete Bible was translated into the vernacular Armenian and printed in the year 1853. Twenty-eight years prior to that date, i.e., in 1825, the first vernacular New Testament was printed, in Venice, in the printing press of the Roman Catholic Armenian fraternity of St. Lazarus, the Mukhitarist Brotherhood. The complete Bible was translated and printed by William Griffiths, in Smyrna. This late appearance of the vernacular version of the Bible was not due to the laxity or indifference of those concerned to make the Scriptures available to the public in a language clearly understood by them. Before the nineteenth century vernacular Armenian was not yet a read or written language. It had not yet taken usable form. The publication of the Scriptures in modern Armenian coincided, in a natural way, with the period of the renaissance of the Christian peoples of the Near East in general and of the Armenian people in particular during the first half of the nineteenth century. The publication was a result of that renaissance and at the same time a factor in bringing it about.

The first printing of the complete Bible in classical Armenian was done in 1666 in Amsterdam by an Armenian Orthodox monk by the name of Oskan. Up to the year 1895 nine different publications of the complete Bible by different people had been made and widely distributed.

In the year 1817 the Russian Bible Society, of which the Armenian Catholicos-Patriarch in Holy Etchmiadzine was a member, printed 5,000 copies of the complete Bible in classical Armenian and distributed them among Armenians mainly under Russian rule.

In the same year, i.e. in 1817, the British and Foreign Bible Society printed 2,000 copies of the complete Bible in ancient Armenian in Calcutta and distributed them among the Armenians of the Near East.

In 1895 the American Bible Society printed the complete Bible in classical Armenian in Constantinople.

Thus two of the nine different publications in ancient Armenian were made by Protestant Bible Societies. Since then there have been many printings of these publications.

The old love of an interest in the Scriptures on the part of the Armenians has waned to a considerable extent in recent times, especially since the first world war. Discussion of the causes of this decline is outside the scope of this article. Of the two main causes one is general and common to other churches and their peoples. The onslaught of science and naturalism upon the traditional ways of Christian thinking, the difficulty of showing the relevance of the thought forms and norms of the world outlet in which the divine message of the Bible is cast, the gradual blurring of the meaning of the terms and images in which the teachings of the Bible are couched—all these have estranged the modern man from the Holy Scriptures.

The second cause of the decline of interest in the Bible among Armenians is a special one. After the first world war they were uprooted from their native land and were scattered to many foreign lands. The difficulty of adapting themselves and of settling in new and foreign environments consumed all their energy. The Church was weakened and could not do effective work for internal evangelisation. Thus a certain drift away from the Holy Scriptures has taken place among Armenians, concomitant with the drift away from the bases of the Christian faith.

All these, however, do not mean that the Bible reading habit of the Armenian people has altogether been lost. It would not be an exaggeration to state that perhaps 50% of Armenian homes have Bibles on their book shelves, often together with other devotional books, such as the tragedy of St. Gregory of Narek and the Breviary of the Armenian Church.

More often than not there are two Bibles in each home—one in ancient and one in modern Armenian. In many homes the Bible is frequently read, sometimes individually and sometimes collectively. Those families whose children go to Sunday Schools have invariably a Bible in their home. The children who go to Sunday School often urge their parents to read the Bible. A lay church worker and Sunday School teacher of Beirut, a university graduate and a devout member of the Orthodox Mother Church, assured the present writer that more than half of the Armenian families in Lebanon have Bibles in their homes and a good proportion of these, approximately half, read the Bible at home fairly frequently. Sometimes the children read and the parents listen. Here in Jordan where there are no Sunday Schools yet, many homes have Bibles which are read fairly frequently. Unfortunately there are no statistics to give accurate percentages. About 6,000 Armenian families are in Jordan, mainly in Jerusalem and Amman. These are mostly refugees. Since 1948 the Bible House office in Jerusalem has sold to Armenians in Jordan 324 complete Bibles, 739 New Testaments and 2,362 other separate books of the Bible. Probably the proportion of sales per family is higher in Lebanon and Syria.

The desire is noticeable among many young Armenians to return to their Christian roots and to find their anchor and inward security thereon, but "the harvest is great and the labourers few."

Yet the spirit of God is as active as ever. "As if a man should cast a seed into the ground and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how."

II

Papken Varjabedian

The conversion of Armenia

There is more than one piece of evidence leading one to regard the land of Armenia as a part of the land of the Bible. There is historical Mount Ararat with Noah's Ark, Armenia was mentioned in prophetic writings, and being a neighbouring country to the Holy Land the Gospel was preached there by a few of the Apostles of Christ at the dawn of the first century. Armenia had Jewish colonies and it is believed that some Jews from Armenia were present in Jerusalem during Pentecost (Acts 2:9). Thus Christianity was preached in Armenia in the apostolic age through Apostles Thaddeus (Judas, not Iscariot, St. John 14:22) and Bartholomew (Luke 6:14).

The Church in Armenia, as in the Roman Empire, was under persecution till the end of the third century. There are many historical records indicating the existence in Armenia of a large body of Christians during the three centuries preceding the official and mass conversion of the nation to the Christian faith at the end of the third century.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the famous ecclesiastical historian, mentions a letter written by the Patriarch of Alexandria to Bishop Mehroozanes of Armenia in 254 A.D. Thus we have the proof according to which Christianity had not only

spread in Armenia, but also had taken organized form with bishops who were well-known outside of Armenia. Martyrology gives us the names of many martyrs in Armenia during the first three centuries.

It was in 287 A.D. that Christianity became the dominant religion of Armenia.* It is significant that this event took place many years earlier than the Edict of Milan, by which Constantine the Great, Roman Emperor, proclaimed Christianity to be a religion on the same footing with paganism.

The great change in Armenia took place through the efforts and extraordinary courage and wisdom of St. Gregory, a nobleman known as "The Enlightener of Armenia". He destroyed heathen pagodas and built churches all over the country, and in 303 A.D. built the Holy See of Etchmiadzin, which is also a cathedral.

The translation of the Holy Bible into the Armenian language

Before the translation of the Holy Bible into Armenian it was read in the Armenian churches in the Greek and Syriac languages, that is, up to the beginning of the fifth century. It was necessary to invent an Armenian alphabet in order to translate the Holy Bible. The people could not understand the readings of the Holy Bible in the church.

History gives the credit of this invention to Mesrop, a priest. He spent much time inventing it, travelling from city to city. After eight years of research and effort, Mesrop devised 36 letters of the Armenian alphabet which produced all the sounds of the language.

The alphabet was completed in the years 404-407 A.D. The first work undertaken was the translation of the Bible, and to accomplish this result Sahak, Catholicos or Patriarch of the Armenian Church, Mesrop and a group of their pupils devoted their united efforts. They began with the Syriac text but discarded it and adopted the Greek version known as the Septuagint.

This is known as the first translation which was completed about 420 A.D. Soon after the Armenian Translator Fathers received a better text of another Greek Bible from Byzantium, and started all over again to translate the Holy Bible. This second translation was completed and put into circulation from 433-436 A.D.

Referring to this second translation, La Croze calls it "The Queen of Versions", because of its exactness and beauty: likewise Professor Conybeare of Oxford University states that the Armenian version of the Bible is as important as the original in Greek.

The names and order of the Holy Bible according to the Armenian Orthodox Church

In 768 A.D. Patriarch or Catholicos Sion of the Armenian Church convened an eccelesiastical council in the city of Partav (Armenia). One of the 24 items on the agenda was the Canon or the order of the Holy Bible.

Besides bishops and priests, many Armenian princes participated in the council. From the days of the translation the Armenian church accepted and is still using the Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament.

***Note.**—The exact date cannot be established yet, since the different historians cannot agree. Patriarch Ormanian declares that the conversion took place in 301 A.D.

The Armenian Church accepted the following books at the Council of Partav for the Old Testament:

1-5, *The Pentateuch*—namely: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. 6, Joshua; 7, Judges; 8, Ruth; 9-12, four books of Kings (1st and 2nd Samuel correspond to 1st and 2nd Books of Kings in the Armenian version); 13-14, First and Second Chronicles; 15-16, two books of Ezra; 17, Job; 18, Psalms; 19-21, Books of Solomon, namely, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs); 22-33, twelve minor prophets; 34-37, four major prophets, namely—Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Jeremiah, which includes Baruch and Lamentations.

The order of Partav Council ends here: but the order of the Armenian Church Old Testament includes to-day the following, evidently added after the tenth century: 38, Nehemiah; 39, Esther; 40, Judith; 41, Tobit; 42-44, I, II, III Maccabees; 45, the wisdom of Solomon; 46, Ecclesiasticus.

A close study will reveal that the Armenian Church uses very seldom the last 9 books in church readings. This means that originally these last 9 books were Apocrypha books.

To-day the Apocrypha books are the following:—

1, The prayer of Manasses. 2, Testament or Will of Twelve prophets. 3, Story of Joseph and Asanet. 4, Death of 16 prophets. 5, II and III Esdras.

God's Breath is another name given to the Holy Bible in the Armenian language (II Timothy 3:16). Thus the Armenian Church accepts the Holy Bible as inspired by God; however, this does not mean literary inspiration. All round the year there are sections assigned to the Church to be read for every day, mainly from the Gospels, and selections from the books of prophets and of Epistles.

The order of the New Testament is the same. It is worth while to note that the Book of Revelation officially is not read during the services; this book was admitted in the New Testament order of the Armenian Church Bible after the twelfth century.

The Place of the Bible in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt

Makary el Souriany

"*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path*". (*Psalm* 119:105)

Travelling through the wilderness of this life, the pilgrim needs more powerful light than his limited human abilities can afford. Facing the perplexities of the internal struggle and crucial psychological crisis, nothing can grant peace to the heart and comfort to the soul, except the living Word of God.

This same Word enforced those who had heard it to carry its tidings to all nations. From this living seed the church grew up.

The Word was planted in the land of Egypt by St. Mark in 64 A.D. Irrigated by his blood of martyrdom, it grew up by God's grace, as a large tree which remained standing through the ages in spite of the stormy winds of persecution and the dreadful hurricanes of torture which blew over it.

I. The historical relations between Egypt and the Bible

The Coptic Church of Egypt has a very deep biblical background:

A. *The Land.* Studying the Bible from its first Book, the reader will not finish the tenth chapter of Genesis until he hears about "Mizraim" the father of the Egyptians. Two chapters later he reads about Abram going to Egypt (Gen. 12:10). And so on through the Old and New Testaments until the book of the Revelation; Egypt is considered one of the famous lands of the Bible.

The Bible includes many prophecies about Egypt. In regard to its future, it was blessed as a Christian nation. Isaiah prophesies saying: "In that day shall there be an altar* to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt" (19:19), "and the Lord shall be known to Egypt" (19:21) . . . . "Blessed be Egypt my people" (19:2).

The land was also blessed by the Lord himself when he visited Egypt as a refugee. For two years the Holy Family travelled from city to city and from village to village "Out of Egypt have I called my Son" (Matt. 2:15). Upon these blessed places churches and monasteries were built.

B. *The Book.* Egypt received the Bible with great joy and elaborated it with translations, different studies as well as practical application to life.

1. The Old Testament was translated from Hebrew to the Greek Septuagint by the 72 Jewish elders in Alexandria in 283 B.C.

2. Egypt was among the first lands to receive the Gospels:

(*a*) The Gospel of Mark was written by St. Mark the first Bishop of Alexandria.

(*b*) Luke dedicated his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles to Theophilus, a lay gentile of Alexandria.

(*c*) Tradition relates the discovery of the original version of Matthew to Pantaenus of Alexandria. He brought it from India to Alexandria where it was translated from Hebrew to Greek.

C. *Translations.* When Christianity spread into the interior of the country where the Greek language was not understood by the majority of Egyptians, the Scriptures had to be translated into the different Coptic dialects of the Egyptian language. The translation of the whole Bible was made in the Catechetical School of Alexandria in the latter part of the second century.

When the Copts preached Christianity in Nubia and Sudan, the Scriptures were translated into the Nubian language written in Coptic characters. In Ethiopia they were translated into the Ethiopian native tongue."Ge'ez".

Just before the beginning of the 13th century the Bible was translated into Arabic in Egypt as a result of the spread of the Arabic language among the Copts at that time.

* He means a Christian altar and not a Jewish ; only one Jewish altar was admitted—in Jerusalem.

D. *Biblical Works.* "The Alexandria of Apollos and of St. Mark has become the earliest seat of Christian learning. Alexandria becomes the brain of Christendom".**

Most historians consider that systematic biblical studies and biblical theology were started by the scholars of the Catechetical School of Alexandria. The Fathers of the Coptic Church left a very rich heritage of biblical literature. Many commentaries, homilies, and exegetical works were written by Pantaenus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Didymus, Isidore, Cyril, Theodore and Theophilus of Alexandria.

Origen's famous Hexapla and other biblical studies led Harnack to state "Origen made the theology of the church the theology of both Testaments".†

The first steps towards a convenient division of the New Testament were done by two Alexandrian deacons. "Ammonius of Alexandria (220 A.D.) is generally credited with dividing the Gospels into sections".‡ Upon these Eusebius of Caesarea, a century later, founded his ten canons. In the fifth century, Euthalius, a deacon of Alexandria, introduced a system of division into all those books not yet divided, except the Apocalypse.§

The apologetical works of the Egyptian Fathers defended the biblical teachings against the attacks of the heathen philosophers and of the persecuting governors.

The Roman Empire thought it could destroy the Church by abolishing the Bible. To preserve the Holy Scriptures, the Copts made hidden places in every church building and in their homes, to keep the Bible away from the eyes of the persecutors.

E. *Propagation.* The Copts did not keep the Word to themselves but carried it to other nations. The Coptic scholars of the Catechetical School of Alexandria and later the monks of the Egyptian deserts, went preaching Christianity to all parts of the world. They reached North Ireland, Zürich, Belgium and France. In the south they established churches in Nubia, Sudan, Ethiopia, India and Arabia.

F. *Monasticism.* The monastic life began by a moved heart in one who heard the Bible and wished to fulfil it practically in his life. St. Anthony (250 A.D.) heard the reader in the church say: "If thou wouldst be perfect go sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Matt. 19:21). Acting on this injunction he sold his property and gave the product of the sale to the poor, then he retired to the desert and founded the first monastery.

This spiritual monasticism was not an end in itself, rather it was the means by which to achieve the Christian virtues and the biblical teachings. The motive was that faith must exhibit itself in a Christ-like life. Harnack says: "Monasticism may fitly be called the climax and crown of His ideals". ¶ Groves says of it: "An outstanding contribution was made by Egyptian Christianity to the whole of Christendom in the development of the monastic life".††

**A. Roberts, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. II, p. 165.
† Harnack, "Bible Reading in the Early Church", p. 135.
‡ Murray's "Dictionary of Christian Biography", p. 349.
§ Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. I. p. 288.
¶ Harnack : Christian Monasticism, p.12.
†† Groves : The Planting of Christianity in Africa. p.42.

Monks are famous for their spiritual meditations on the Bible. Before inventing the printing press, monks were the workshop of producing Bible manuscripts to provide the Word of God for lay Christians and churches of the world.

II. The Bible in Coptic worship and rites

Coptic services are a continuous programme of teaching the Bible. Every service has a biblical impact.

During the liturgical service a series of biblical lessons are read: (*a*) two lessons from the Gospels, (*b*) one from the Pauline Epistles, (*c*) one from the Catholic Epistles, (*d*) and one from the Acts of the Apostles. Each Gospel lesson is preceded by some verses from the Psalms. Parts of the Old Testament are read during seasons of fasts and feasts. During the Holy Week, two church services are held daily, one in the morning and the other in the evening. These services are mainly lessons from the Bible. The whole four Gospels with selections from the Old Testament are read.

The lessons are chanted to give an opportunity for meditation. The mass itself recalls and symbolises the important events in the life of our Lord Jesus, from the Nativity to the Resurrection.

There are special occasions which dramatise the events and their spiritual meaning. Even the most ignorant person could receive a lesson; for instance, when on Maundy Thursday the priest washes the feet of members of the congregation, following the words of our Saviour: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14).

The Coptic Church uses the Bible as a text book for teaching the art of praying. The main book of daily prayers "The Book of Hours" is composed of seven prayers daily. Every prayer of the seven is composed of 12 Psalms, a Gospel lesson and a litany.

Even the church music is based upon biblical events. Among the vast varieties of Coptic music, there are long hymns used in fasts and feasts, forming Bible stories and teachings in detail. There is also a kind of religious folklore through which the people learn much about the Bible.

III. The Bible in education

The Coptic Church is a teaching church. Its educational institutions started since the days of her early establishment. Since the first century the Catechumenal schools were preparing the candidates for Baptism, the curriculum of which was biblically centred.

It became a tradition that a school must be attached to every Coptic Church. The reading textbook was the Four Gospels. The recitation selections were from the Psalms.

The contemporary curriculum of Christian education for day schools and that for the Sunday Schools is a Bible-centred one. More than three-quarters of the sessions are biblical studies. Visual aids, dramatisation, projects and other progressive methods are used to illustrate the Bible stories.

Students are encouraged to read the Bible at home. The teacher assigns to them certain chapters to be read during the week days. They are asked to fill

up daily their readings in a printed record sheet. Special awards and prizes are given to those who study or memorize Bible passages. Bible stories are formed into hymns for the different age-goups.

Most of the youth groups attend a weekly meeting for biblical studies. They study the Bible by different methods alternatively to provide variation and avoid monotony: biographies, topics, books, verse by verse, chronological, ethical and social problems, etc.

One of the effective methods used to encourage Bible study is the Bible with blank sheets between every two pages to help the student write his own meditations and studies. Another method used, is to print the Gospel with 300 questions, to be answered by underlining the relevant verses. Special recording sheets are distributed to remind the youth to read the Bible daily and register selected verses.

Among the numerous Coptic benevolent societies which teach the Bible and hold Bible classes, there is a special society called "The Coptic Society of the Friends of the Bible".

Biblical studies are the main courses in the leadership training programmes. The curriculum of the Coptic Theological College at Cairo emphasises biblical subjects and languages. Christian hostels for university students hold a Bible study meeting every evening.

A wide programme is planned to promote biblical knowledge in rural areas. Two volunteer teachers visit the villagers weekly, to hold a Sunday School class for children at noon and a Bible class for adults at night. Literacy campaigns are held in some villages to enable the farmers to read the Bible. In these cases free Gospels are distributed.

Recently there has started an active movement for editing and publishing religious books, magazines and pamphlets for the use of the Coptic reader. A great many of these publications emphasise biblical subjects.

The Coptic Church has been and still is biblically rooted.

Introducing the Bible to Muslims

A. Kenneth Cragg

IBN JUBAYR WAS AN Andalusian Muslim who travelled from Spain to Mecca on the Pilgrimage in the 12th century and left behind him a fascinating travelogue. Those were the days of the Crusading Kingdom in Jerusalem and there was a good deal of Christian (Rumi) traffic on the broad and stormy Mediterranean. Our Muslim traveller early in his venture records how his vessel was tossed in a violent tempest off Sardinia. "As we lay in this parlous plight . . . being unable to distinguish the east from the west, God revealed to us a Rumi ship approaching. When it was beside us, we asked whither it was going and were told that it was bound for the island of Sicily and had come from Cartagena in the province of Murcia. Without our knowledge, we had been sailing before this ship on its course and thereupon we took to following in its wake. God is the Disposer of all things: there is none but He".*

The mists of the Mediterranean storm closed again over that transient encounter and only by chance has it been rescued from the mists of time. Yet it is in the end a truer insight into patterns of religious relationship than we can

* Quoted from R. J. C. Broadhurst : Travels of Ibn Jubayr, London, 1952.

discern in the sharpness of bitterness which in those crusading days and long since them characterised the dealings of Christian and Muslim. Everyone knows that the two faiths have sharp antipathies. These are still a major problem in presenting the events and the faith of the Bible to the Islamic world. But it is the very depth of those problems which demands that in spirit we transcend the long dominant attitudes of reproach, alienation and polemic.

Ibn Jubayr's fellow seamen, Muslim and Christian, Hajji and Rumi, were involved in the same storm, the same mortality, the same finitude. In that context of the surrounding sea, they were aware of each other as men in common setting. This sense of a common humanity with Islam to-day is the first Christian pre-requisite in proclaiming the Biblical faith. The very urge to translate and distribute the Scriptures rests upon the conviction that they relate to all men and to a common situation in sin and yearning, wistfulness and need, in which equally all men find themselves. For is not the Bible representative even where it is most selective? Does it not illustrate the waywardness of all in the history of the few? It is particularly about Palestine but it concerns the world. The ability of the interpreter to help all men to a sense of their involvement in what the Bible means and describes is the first condition of alerting them to its message.

We can only do this by evidently sharing with them in the circumstances of their existence, including a reverent study of their religious heritage. We must proclaim the Bible's witness to the saving acts of God in imaginative, contemporary relationship to what it is from which men need to be saved as that is disclosed in the world of their lives and their culture. We can be helped to this by the fact that more and more of the dangers of the modern world—from nuclear fission, from Communism, from secular materialism—are common dangers, which like Ibn Jubayr's mariners, we all share. Our witness to the Bible's faith must speak to what is real and relevant in the contemporary aspirations and fears of men of other Scriptures.

In doing so, we must be alive to two other facts our parable off Sardinia also illustrates. Islam and Christianity have much in common. Their courses coincide in part, like vessels at sea. But to bring the Muslim to share the Christian's course fully and finally is "the hardest part". The Bible itself is the ground and arena of these likenesses and disparities. The Qur'an, the Arabic Scriptures of Islam, shares many Biblical doctrines and much Biblical history. It affirms the Oneness of God, the sin of idolatry, the majesty of creation and the significance of nature. It shares with the Bible the certainty of the dignity and vocation of man to rule over the created world as the servant of the Lord, as master of things in willing tribute to God. In the words with which another famous Muslim traveller, Ibn Battuta, prefaces his narrative: "God has subdued the earth to His servants that they may tread thereon spacious ways . . . . and hath perfected His bounty towards His creatures". This common ground of faith as to man's place as creature and servant, together with their firm assurance of God's personality and power, set Islam and Christianity together in marked contrast with the faiths that originate in further Asia, outside the Hebraic and Greek traditions.

And much of the actual patriarchal history is common. About a score of Biblical personalities, including Zachariah, the Baptist, Mary and our Lord, from the New Testament, have their place in the Qur'an. The narratives in some cases are sadly wanting, especially in those realms which are most important. The Cross of Jesus is specifically denied (though it is recognised that there was a will to crucify—a significant point often overlooked by Christians, on

which a very important Muslim study of Good Friday as a measure of human sin has lately been written by a Muslim scholar).† The teachings of our Lord also are hardly discernible in the somewhat shadowy figure of the Isa (Jesus) of the Qur'an. Nor is there any clear picture of His living compassion and His works of grace: but only summary references to lepers, blind, sick and dead, who knew His touch of life: The Old Testament narratives, however, though differing in lesser details, have many of the same broad features and teach the sureness of the ways of God and the judgment of the evildoers. Joseph in the full circle of his trials and triumphs sets forth the abiding truth of a providence through adversity, while Noah in the safety of the ark sees the vindication of his fidelity and the disaster of the gainsayers.

The task of presenting the world of the Bible to the world of the Qur'an is both served and complicated by these likenesses and disparities. For it has to be remembered that the Biblical version is judged by the Muslim in the strict light of what he thinks by Quranic parallels it should contain. Whatever diverges tends to be dubbed 'corruption' or to be considered as 'abrogated'. The Qur'an is believed to confirm all previous Scriptures, since Muhammad is understood to be 'the seal of the Prophets'. So confident is the Muslim in this belief that it does not matter that the actual words of Jesus (if other than those in the New Testament) are irrecoverable, since the Muslim Holy Book is the sum and substance of all earlier truth. And whereas earlier Prophets, in the long sequence that began with Adam, were partial, either in their times, their hearers or their themes, the Qur'an contains what is universal to all times, peoples and places.

One urgent realm of Biblical communication to Muslims concerns the contrasted concept of revelation. It can be readily illustrated in the underlying idea of what the 'Gospel' is for Islam. The word is there in the Qur'an in the Arabicised form of the Greek original, 'Injil'. But it signifies a body of teaching, or of words which God caused to come down from Heaven upon the Prophet Jesus. The latter's role in the Gospel is simply that He receives it and utters it, as it might be a code of directives for moral life. The 'Gospel' as the Qur'an sees it, is in no sense the record of a Divine initiative of grace, in which a loving Personality acting in a variety of revelatory situations from Bethlehem to Olivet, discloses in personal terms the nature of the Eternal, so that He could validly say: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father". On the contrary. Revelation is in the strict sense verbal and bookish. The Qur'an constitutes it finally. But it is believed that all other 'prophetic' books are similarly constituted. God through His angels causes His Prophets to know and speak certain words. He does not Himself come revealingly into the world, taking up human personality to disclose therein His Divine glory.

Whereas on this, Christian, count, there is a fitness in the fact of *four* Gospels (since the revealed Personality entered human ken and the resultant meaning had to be appropriated in personal experience and event) on the Muslim count there should be, for a code of teaching, one single Gospel. The fact of four disproves the validity of any. The only way to help retrieve this basic misunderstanding is to penetrate to the contrasted conception of revelation from which it derives. There is a similar difficulty with the Epistles of the New Testament. For the average Muslim they can have no validity. Revelation is downward from Heaven, from God to men. If an apostle chooses to correspond with his friends how can this be disclosure from Heaven? A similar difficulty, less pointedly, occurs for the Muslim with the Psalms and all other literature (like

† *Qaryah Zalimah*, or "City of Wrong", Cairo, 1954. It describes Good Friday as "the darkest day in human history.

the confessions of Jeremiah) where man addresses God in the Bible. The Qur'an outside the opening Surah, contains almost no direct address of man to God. The whole movement is the other way. The technical Quranic concept is *Tanzil*, which means 'causing to come down' (the Book understood). The whole Christian sense of being in receipt of revelation culminates in what might be called, in Arabic, *Tanázul*, or God's coming down, for us men and for our salvation. The record of this supreme event, rooted in history, both preparatory and actual, and discovered in an active significance by those who stand under its meaning—this is the witness of the Bible. If we would convey its joy and wonder we must first enter into the origins of the Quranic rejection of the criteria on which it proceeds.

The same is true of the most tragic of all Muslim hostilities—its disavowal of the Crucifixion of Christ. The Cross did not happen, because it should not happen. The servant of God (for in Islam Jesus is no more) cannot be thought of as left exposed to such humiliation and shame. The God who sends Him will of course intervene to save Him. For is not God Almighty? Will not His Almightiness be demonstrated in a dramatic rescue, which will at the same time thwart His enemies? Unaware that "the power of God" might actually make of suffering its sublime instrument and of thorns a truly royal crown, Islam has missed the Divine majesty of Jesus crucified. To restore that tremendous dimension of grace in suffering and of love in self-oblation is the ultimate task of the Bible trustee in the Muslim's world.

But in this and all his other tasks—whether rescuing misconception, saving indifference, enlightening prejudice or interpreting the strange—he will be wise to recognise those wide areas of common heritage and conviction. No reader of the BULLETIN needs to be reminded that even simple linguistic translation calls for much more than the dictionary. It requires patient sensitivity to the feel and wonder of words and a loving penetration of the thought worlds and mental images of the other party. How much more the work of communication that only begins when the Scriptures are there to be read—the work of bringing their glory home. Like a translator who must find his words where he would bring his meanings, we must labour to discover and discern the deepest meanings of Muslim faith in order to interpret the Gospel of Christ. Happily there are many such—more than some Christians, in their pervading ignorance of things Islamic, have sometimes been able to appreciate. There is the truth of man's high calling, of his fraility and destiny, of God's greatness and the inclusive Divine-human relationship of worship and obedience.

Properly understood, the Grace of God, as the Gospel proclaims it, is crucial to the Islamic concept of the rule of God. "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee", was the cry of the Psalmist: it is the confession of Islam. "There is no god save Thou". But whereas historic Islam has been concerned with the sin of crude idolatry as *the* affront to God which must be suppressed, Christian faith is concerned with the inner idolatries of self-love and sin, which can only be brought into right by redemption and sacrifice. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" were amongst the latest Biblical words to be penned. But the surest 'keeping' from the deepest idols is the work of the saving love of God in Christ.

All the potential clues to Christ that are available in Islam must be studied and harnessed in the presentation of the Biblical faith. But in the end, "the Arab's mind" as the proverb says, "is in his eyes". And so are most men's. The meaning of God in Christ must be seen in you and me. That, in the end, is how the Bible may come to be understood.

The Old Testament in the Arab World

Ignatius Hazeem

THE OLD TESTAMENT has a special significance to the Arabs in general for diverse reasons:

1. It was revealed in their own countries. Almost every place of the different Arab areas correlates with a souvenir of the Old Testament. Wherever the Arab moves, he meets with holy places, holy at least for a group of the Arab speaking world. Names familiar to the Old Testament readers are heard right up to the present day in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, etc.

2. Because the Old Testament has been revealed in these parts of the world, it has some special nuances for the present populations. The Hebrew, Syrian and Arab languages are Semitic with beautiful handwriting going from right to left, with repetition in style, poetic expressions, verses in religious hymns; all these constitute a natural expression of their mode of thinking. There are few linguistic ambiguities; even omissions in the text of the Old Testament such as "they brought to . . . ." without mentioning the noun, which the word "they" replaces, would not astonish or disturb their logical sense. Words suggest sometimes much more than they express or determine. Numerous habits, such as asking a woman for water, or giving an apostle to eat with one's own hands, would be found natural even in their present life and customs.

3. But the most important fact that links the Arabs to the Old Testament is the religious factor. Whether Moslem or Christian, the Arab believes in the importance of the Old Testament. The Koran in many of its passages presumes that one knows the Jewish Sacred Book. A man initiated in the Old Testament would read between the Koran lines texts, meanings, and stories of the Old Testament. Many think that a few of the stories, especially that of Joseph, presuppose the integral text of the Old Testament to be fully understood.

For the Christian, it is futile to discuss or to prove the value of the Old Testament, because not a single one could admit of a discontinuity between the Old and New Covenant. Of course there are exaggerations:

Many sects called Christian, for instance, admit to shifting the importance to the Old Testament so much that one can no more distinguish between their apparent Christianity and true Judaism. Their law of behaviour is not the Sermon on the Mount but exclusively the Ten Commandments. Their God is no more the Loving God who condescends to simple human nature, but Yahweh strong and jealous, not much caring for the act of incarnation. Thus the Arab Christian daily meets with those who, for the sake of the Old Testament, just rule out our Lord and begin, anew, discussions about His divinity and the authenticity of His preaching.

4. In the present political situation the Old Testament takes the first rank among important documents. For many, and even Christians in the West, the present State of Israel is the fulfilment of a biblical expected cycle.

For the Arab, especially the Christian, this is a stupid interpretation of the Bible. Biblical Israel is not a State even if it sometimes took that form. Political Israel is not religious. Political Israel cannot recover the Levite order to make the glory of God come back to the Temple. Biblical Israel has value to the extent to which it obeys God and submits to His almighty will. The present State of Israel can be atheistic, like most of the governments of the world. Lastly, no Christian in the Arab world would not believe the declaration of his New Testament that Our Saviour is the new Israel and that the Church is the new people of God.

This is in general the place and effect of the Old Testament in the Arab countries. I may qualify the place of the Old Testament in the Arab world as being a major one, and the effects as beyond all measure.

The Relation of Bible Society Work to Churches and Missions

I. IN SYRIA AND LEBANON

F. E. Accad

"THE BIBLE SOCIETY is the handmaid of the Church" has been the motto of our Bible Society for many years past, not only in this Agency, but also in the whole world. We have realised its truth more especially in this area because of the presence of many denominations. The experience of one of our colporteurs may very well illustrate this fact. He was newly appointed to a very fanatical district. In fact he was the first Bible Society worker to be appointed permanently there, as we thought that the time was ripe for such a move. But after a few months of very fruitful activity, the colporteur was arrested, ill-treated, imprisoned and ordered to leave the district within 24 hours. As no reason was given him for this treatment our agent went to see the authorities and to ask them about the incident. In response to his questions, the responsible security official went to an inner room, brought out a copy of the Bible saying: "It is because we have caught him selling this book".—"Is this all you have against him?", asked the agent—"Isn't this enough?", was the answer, "See! This is filled with the name of Israel! . . . . We have also found this same book with other people called the Jehovah's Witnesses, who are forbidden to remain in this country".—"Listen", said the agent, "If your own religious book is found with some good or some bad people, does this affect the quality and the tenor of the book itself? . . . . And about the word 'Israel', aren't you aware that your own religious book mentions this word hundreds of times? . . . . This book is the Bible, the book of the Christian Church and you cannot forbid its sales, nor arrest any one only because he sells it!"—"You have to prove that this is the book of all the Christian churches", was the answer. At this, our agent went and saw all the religious Christian heads of the district, bishop, priests, pastors, Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Syrians, etc. And as he explained to them the case, they immediately signed their names to a statement saying that the Bible was, in fact, not only the Book of the entire Christian Church, but also the means of its birth, its foundation stone and the food on which it lives! When the government security official read this, he was obliged to withdraw his former order and to allow the colporteur to continue his work. He also apologised

for what had been done, promising to keep a sympathetic eye on him and to help him to carry on his work in spite of the intrigues of the fanatical religious heads who were the cause, we gathered, of what had taken place.

Complete understanding and hearty mutual help govern the relations of this Agency with all the churches of the area. Friendly visits are always exchanged on special occasions. Bishops, archbishops, pastors and clergy of all ranks have spoken at our festivals, taken part in our exhibitions and written articles in our Arabic quarterly magazine recommending the Holy Scriptures for reading and wide distribution. They have not only bought the Scriptures themselves but have arranged with our agents to give special terms to such groups as the "Orthodox and Coptic Youth Movements", for instance, when they purchase Scriptures in quantities for distribution to others.

It is worth mentioning here that the list of our speakers on the occasion of the Third Jubilee of the British and Foreign Bible Society was composed of a Greek Orthodox bishop, a Syrian Orthodox bishop (now a patriarch), an Armenian Orthodox bishop, and also religious workers of the Church of England, the Episcopalian Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Congregational Church, the Armenian Evangelical Church, the Society of Friends and several other groups as well.

But the greatest contribution to the Society's work is still coming from the Evangelical churches, missions and institutions, who receive our workers enthusiastically and give them all possible help and encouragement in the performance of their task; who take part and sometimes sponsor Scripture distribution campaigns, exhibitions, festivals, stalls, etc., who invite our agents to speak at their meetings and conferences, and to take part in their councils, committees and synods; and who always hold in their institutions special meetings for Universal Bible Sunday, exhibiting in well chosen places our Bible advertisements and posters.

A very important aspect of this fellowship is the financial contributions made by the churches and individuals towards the Society's work. In Syria-Lebanon these contributions have risen from L.L.1287.80 in 1951 to L.L.14810.80 in 1957.

A group of young people from various churches and missions in Beirut gathers every first Sunday of the month in the house of the writer and after a short period of intercession, goes out to visit different parts of the town with several folding tables on which they display the Scriptures and sell them to passers by. In their last "sortie" they numbered 22 and in a couple of hours they sold 207 books including 3 complete Bibles and 4 New Testaments. The rest were mainly Gospels in simple or illustrated formats as well as a number of bilingual editions. Two parts of the city are visited fairly frequently in this way. The first is the horse-race campus where, on Sunday afternoon, many people lose all they have earned during the whole week and which should have been spent on their own needs and the needs of their families. As these people come out, not only with dark looks on their faces but also with a heavy load on their hearts, we meet them and offer them the Scriptures through which they can find deliverance from their bondage and strength to live a happy and useful life. It is most encouraging to see how some of these people buy the Scripture and go home to read it instead of remaining dull and hopeless and open to every possible

evil temptation and sin. The second place is on the sea and river shore where hundreds of people promenade. It has been our privilege not only to have edifying conversations with many of the crowd, but in at least two cases where young people have been waiting for the night to come in order to commit suicide near one of the high rocks of the sea-shore called the "Pigeon Rock" they have been turned from their intention after we had spoken to them. They also took the Scriptures home with them in order to read them and to get through them eternal life and the strength they need.

The Bible van used in Lebanon is proving a great help in this distribution of Scriptures. Not only are books transported to remote places, but a greater variety of books are being carried to all the churches, mission stations and institutions. The van is used further to carry stocks to Scripture exhibitions and stalls wherever possible especially during Bible Sunday and at meetings where the workers have had the opportunity of delivering messages. We very much hope that in the future we will be able to add audio-visual equipment to the van, which will enhance its value and extend its use greatly.

Greek Orthodox clergy and laymen, especially young laymen and women, are becoming more and more active in the Lebanon in buying the Scriptures and distributing them to those who do not possess them. Several priests and young people have called on us this year to buy large quantities of Scriptures which they use for this purpose. Others have started Bible studies and Sunday Schools and have bought Scriptures for the participants. Others still have brought their daily students to see our Bible Exhibition and displays and have at the same time bought Scriptures for themselves and their students.

All this is very encouraging and will be more effective if special care is given to cultivate these efforts through personal contacts, possible joint conferences and other similar methods.

We are thankful to Almighty God and to all our friends for the help and encouragement received and for all that has been achieved. But we are very far from being satisfied, for there is a great task still ahead of us. Two plans are very much on our hearts for the development of our relations with the churches, missions and religious institutions of this area. The first plan is intended to promote our relations with the Evangelicals. The second is concerned with our relations with the ancient churches.

To obtain our first objective we are planning what we call "Revival Conferences". These will take place in different parts of Lebanon. The first conference is planned to take place in the Bekaa district from September 6-27 this year. Several churches and missions are collaborating in this effort and are ready to share as much as they can in the expense and effort of running it. The aim of these conferences is two-fold: first. the deepening of the spiritual life of those who are taking part in it through the study of subjects such as: The Inspiration of the Bible—The Trinity—Salvation and Sanctification—Reading and Studying of the Bible—The Church: what it is, its unity and its functions—Prayer, etc. The second aim is directed towards the subject of service and consists of the study of such subjects as Personal Work—Sunday School Activity—The Value of the Human Soul and How to Gain it for Christ—Bible Distribution, Revival, etc. These studies will all be put into practice as the different villages and towns in the district are visited for Bible Colportage and Evangelism.

For the realisation of the second objective, we believe that a "Regional Conference" where Ancient and Mission Churches could meet together, on the basis of the Scriptures, to study their problems and to find ways of more co-operation with each other and with the Bible Society, would be very helpful. We sincerely hope that such a conference will be possible before long, for the door of opportunity is still open. We must seize our opportunities for "The night cometh, when no man can work". John 9:4.

II. IN EGYPT

Christo Psiloinis

Relations with the Churches

The Christian church in Egypt, which is the minority of the population, is represented by such groups as the Coptic and Greek Orthodox, the Catholic and the various Protestant groups. Christian churches, mission schools, hospitals and missionaries are scattered all over the country and some villages, especially in Upper Egypt, are predominantly Christian.

Some years ago the Bible Society was mainly co-operating with the Protestant groups. They were the ones to help the Bible Society in its distribution and give their limited financial support. The Copts were believing us to be an Anglican organisation and the Scriptures were considered to be Protestant propaganda. As the years passed, however, and especially after the World War II, a developing interest in the Bible and a growing sympathy started towards the work of the Bible Society. Good leaders within the Coptic church organised Sunday Schools and societies which besides the catechism were also teaching the Scriptures. Enlightened and broad-minded clergy have made up their minds to propagate the Scriptures and such organisations as "The Friends of the Bible" and "Salvation of Souls" have given their moral support to the Bible Society. It was highly encouraging to see that several times during the after-war years whenever Coptic leaders were called upon to take part in any of the Bible Society committees such as the Alexandria Auxiliary, Advisory Committee, Committee for the Revision of the Arabic Bible, they were glad to offer their services. We do believe and pray that their readiness to share in the distribution of the Scriptures will soon be extended to sharing also in the Societies' financial expenses.

It is unfortunate, however, that the second largest Christian community in Egypt, the Catholic, did not follow the example of the Coptic Church. There is still no evidence of any readiness on their part of even freely permitting the members of the Catholic Church to read the Scriptures.

Distribution

The channels through which the distribution of the Scriptures has gone on all these years have been mainly three, the Bible depots, the colporteurs, and the missions. The Bible Society depots are located in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and Tanta. These depots not only serve the town in which they are located but also the churches which are found in the surrounding villages. The missions send their orders to our depots which are immediately sent either by post, truck or railway.

In the past years 12 colporteurs were serving in the Delta area, 3 in Alexandria, 3 in Cairo, 2 in the Canal Zone, and 10 in Upper Egypt. At present only 5

colporteurs work in the Delta, 2 in Alexandria, 1 in the Canal Zone, 1 in Cairo and 5 in Upper Egypt. Our colporteurs have maintained good relations with the churches and they have supplemented their work by serving in areas which cannot be easily approached by missionaries. Usually the colporteurs have been recruited among the evangelists who were used by the evangelical missions and for this reason they have easy access in their meetings. They are highly respected and are very well known. Many of our colporteurs are Coptic Orthodox. Through them good relations are maintained with the Coptic priests in the villages who often are not as broad-minded as the priests of the towns. Our colporteurs are called to serve and prepare a stand in the churchyards during Coptic festivals. The colporteurs' sales for 1957 were 68,687 copies.

Visiting the Churches

Evangelical churches of the society of Khalas el Nofous have regularly been visited by representatives of the Bible Society. Usually the Bible Society is asked to send a speaker when these churches keep their Bible Sunday. Bible Sundays are kept regularly every year. It had been decided by the Synod many years ago that all churches should keep the Bible Sunday and since then it has been kept regularly almost by all. The contributions that we get from these churches, although very little, yet they have been increasing during the last years and should be greatly appreciated taking into consideration the poverty of the people.

During the last five years the Bible Society has organised an exhibition in Alexandria and a meeting for the Jubilee in Cairo. During those meetings eminent leaders of the Evangelical churches and Coptic Church were asked to speak for the Bible Society.

Plans for promoting relations with the churches

In order to promote relations with the churches, so that the Bible Society work may some day become their full responsibility, the Agency in Egypt has set up the following programme:—

1. The churches should be regularly visited. (At least each Evangelical church should be visited once a year.)

2. The evangelistic programme of the churches should be stimulated by granting special discounts.

3. Every church is receiving one attractively framed poster. This poster is changed every year.

4. Arrangements are made to help pastors arrange a show window of samples of our books in their churches.

5. Arrangements are made for a broader use of our films, film strips, slides and teaching aids, especially in the villages where churches are extremely poor in audio-visual aids.

6. Bible Sunday material is sent to all Evangelical churches and missions and a great effort is made to keep the pastor informed either through direct contact or through the mail concerning suggestions on Bible use.

7. The Agency is considering the possibility of the formation of an advisory council in Cairo which in addition to the Alexandria Auxiliary will advise the Agency on Bible Society programme.

The Revision of the Arabic Bible

Butrus Abd al-Malik and John Alexander Thompson

The Van Dyck Arabic Translation

The present Arabic translation of the Bible used by Protestants and many individuals of the Orthodox churches was begun in 1948 under Eli Smith and completed in 1865 under Cornelius Van Dyck, both American missionaries in Syria. Eli Smith was assisted by Butrus al-Bustani, known for his great Arabic dictionary, *Muhit al-Muhit*, and by Sheikh Nasif al-Yaziji, an Arabic poet, essayist and editor of an Arabic journal. Van Dyck was assisted by Sheikh Yusef al-Asir, also an Arabic poet. The Arabic Bible which these men produced was called by R. H. Kilgour "one of the finest of all Bible translations, a standard work which has taken its place among the literary treasures of that beautiful language (Arabic)". (*The Moslem World*, VI. (1916) : 388). Further details on the history of the printed Arabic Bibles may be found in a series of articles by J. A. Thompson in *The Bible Translator* ,VI. (1955), reprinted by the American Bible Society with the title, *The Major Arabic Bibles*.

The Need for Revision

If Eli Smith and Van Dyck were on earth today, they would recognise that their excellent translation of 100 years ago is now in need of revision in several areas. (1) *Style*. The Van Dyck translation, like the English Revised Version of 1881 and the American Standard Version of 1901, often follows the Hebrew and Greek word order, instead of the normal Arabic word order. Hebrew and Greek idioms are sometimes translated into strange and unidiomatic Arabic.

(2) *Language*. In the course of 100 years the Arabic language itself has changed. Words have become obsolete or have taken on new meanings. For example the word *dabbabah*, "creeping things", in Genesis 1:21 usually means "armoured tanks" in present-day usage.

(3) *Interpretation*. The Van Dyck translation represented the best scholarship of its time. In the course of the past century, however, there have been great advances in the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, and archaeology has shed much light on Bible geography, history and customs. For example, the Hebrew word translated *sariyah* "pole" in I. Kings 15:13 is now known to be the proper name of a Canaanite goddess, Asherah.

(4) *Text*. Since the time of Van Dyck ancient Hebrew and Greek manuscripts have been discovered which are closer to the original text of the sacred writers. In the Old Testament the manuscripts of Wadi Qumran sometimes give better readings than the traditional Masoretic Hebrew text. In the New Testament the Van Dyck translation was based mostly on the Greek Textus Receptus, which follows late Greek manuscripts containing slips by scribes in copying. Modern revised Greek texts, like that of Nestle, follow older and better manuscripts.

(5) *Format*. The only punctuation in the Van Dyck translation was a period, or full stop, according to the usage of 100 years ago. In modern Arabic works commas, colons, quotation marks, question marks, and exclamation points greatly facilitate interpretation. The Van Dyck translation made no differentiation in printing passages which are poetry in the original. Most modern translations indicate that such passages were originally poetry by printing in poetic lines.

Preparation for Revision

For years many people have been urging a revision of the Van Dyck Arabic translation. The late Canon W. H. T. Gairdner of Cairo printed his own revised translations together with his Arabic commentaries on Galatians, Philippians, and part of Hebrews. The Rev. Eric F. F. Bishop, formerly Director of the Newman School of Missions in Jerusalem, has collected suggestions for the improvement of the New Testament from various missionary Arabic scholars, and he has graciously made this valuable collection available. We are happy that Professor Bishop is able to serve as a consultant for the Arabic Revision.

In 1954 various Christian leaders in the Arabic speaking world agreed that a conservative revision of the Van Dyck translation was desirable. In 1956 Dr. Eugene A. Nida, Secretary of the Translations Department of the American Bible Society, met with leaders in Beirut, and a plan for the revision of the Arabic Bible was drawn up. Dr. Butrus Abd al-Malik, Professor at The American University at Cairo, and Dr. John Alexander Thompson, Professor at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, were chosen as editorial secretaries for the project. While Dr. Butrus Abd al-Malik was a visiting professor in America during 1955-56, he surveyed the Arabic Bible to find what type of revision was necessary. Thirty-six consultants, both Protestant and Orthodox, have been selected in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Sudan, Tunis, Morocco, England and the United States.

Procedure of the Revision

The editorial secretaries are responsible for preparing a preliminary revision. Dr. Eugene A. Nida's *Bible Translating* has given guidance in general principles of procedure. Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* and Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece* are the basic texts for the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively. We keep the Van Dyck translation, unless the best original text, or Arabic style, or established advances in interpretation require changes. We have adopted some stylistic improvements from the Arabic translations of the Jesuits (1880), of Faris al-Shidyaq (1857), and of The Society of Peace and Love for the New Testament (1953). We also refer to Carlyle and Ford's Arabic Bible of 1811, which in general reproduces the London Polyglot. The Mosul Arabic Bible of 1878 and the Arabic Bible published in Rome in 1671 have also been available, but have not proved very helpful. In English we make constant use of the American Standard Version of 1901 and of the Revised Standard Version of 1952. *La Sainte Bible*, edited by the Dominicans of Jerusalem in 1956, has been helpful and also *Die Heilige Schrift* (the Zürcher Bible), completed in Zürich in 1931. Occasional reference is made to the Syriac and Coptic versions. The standard Hebrew, Greek and Arabic lexicons are constantly used. We especially welcome the appearance of Arndt and Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1957), which replaces Thayer to a large extent. For commentaries we use the volumes of *The International Critical Commentary*

and *The Interpreter's Bible*, and the *Soncino Books of the Bible for the Old Testament* and the series published by Macmillan for the New Testament. The concordance of the Van Dyck translation, a concordance of the Qur'an, and a Greek harmony of the Gospels have proved to be useful tools.

The preliminary revision is mimeographed and then sent out by the Bible Society offices in Cairo and Beirut to the consultants. The suggestions of the consultants are recorded by the editorial secretaries in preparation for another revision before printing.

Thus far preliminary mimeographed revisions have been sent out for Genesis, Proverbs, Matthew 5-7 (The Sermon on the Mount), Mark, and Ephesians. Matthew and Luke are now being completed and mimeographed. During the Summer of 1958 it is hoped that Exodus, Job, and Psalms may be revised. A revision of the Sermon on the Mount, embodying suggestions of the consultants may soon be off the press. Some books will be published before the printing of the entire Bible. The preliminary revision may be completed in about four years, God willing.

Problems of Revision

One of the chief objections to the revision of the Arabic Bible has been that a revised Bible will suffer by comparison with a uniform and unchanging Arabic Qur'an. It can be pointed out that the Arabic Bible is a translation, and that we are only seeking to make this translation closer to the original, more understandable, and more attractive. Similarly there have been many revised English translations of the Qur'an. Furthermore there are already two well-known Arabic translations of the Bible : the Van Dyck and the Jesuit. In Islam only the Arabic text of the Qur'an is recognised as inspired, and only the Arabic Qur'an can be used in public reading and worship and in the required prayers. The Christian Church on the other hand has always held that the inspired message of salvation is not limited to the original languages of the Bible, but is also found in translations, and that translations are also the Word of God and may be used in public worship and private devotion. So the Christian Church is under obligation to provide the people with the best translation possible in their own language. This means that translations of the Bible must be revised from time to time, as knowledge of the original languages advances and as the languages of the people change. The benefits of one hundred years of intensive Bible study should not be withheld from the Arab-speaking world.

Another aspect of the Arab-speaking world which must be considered in a revision of the Bible is the conservatism of both Protestants and Orthodox in matters of religion. This conservatism has helped to preserve the Christian faith in the face of centuries of pressure. Significantly one of the Arabic words for heresay is *bid'ah*, literally "an innovation". Therefore a revison of the Arabic Bible must be conservative, changing only what urgently needs improvement. One of the chief criticisms in the Near East of the modern English translations is that they omit from the text a few verses of late authority. So no verses can be omitted from the Arabic Revision without arousing misunderstanding and opposition. The Bible Society's publication in Arabic, *al-Kitab al-Muqad-das fi al-'Alam*, "The Bible in the World", ably edited by Mr. Fouad Accad of the Bible Society in Syria and Lebanon, has helped to prepare people for a revision.

A Word of Thanks

The editorial secretaries wish to take this opportunity of thanking the personnel of the Bible Society in Egypt, in Lebanon, and in the Translations Department in New York for their constant cooperation and encouragement in this revision. We also thank the consultants for their comments, on which much of the value of the revisions depends. And lastly we thank God who has helped us hitherto in this serious responsibility of making His Word available in a better form for the Arabic-speaking world.

Problems of Scripture Production in the Near East

Siegfried Friedlieb

PRINTING THE SCRIPTURES in the Near East presents first of all the same problems as elsewhere—only more so. As all the paper-mills are situated in the West, and only a few of them are directly represented in Cairo and Beirut, it may take months before the right kind of paper is found, even with the help of headquarters. Furthermore, the world demand for paper has been on the increase since the end of the Second World War, so that delivery dates tend to be unusually long. The same applies to the deliveries of binding cloth, cardboard, etc. This means that all printing projects must be planned well ahead if we want to run no risks of Scriptures being sold out.

Printing-presses and binderies do not reach the high technical standard of the large presses in Europe or the United States. To print on India Paper presents a problem which only a very few printers can solve, and even so only by printing on small-sized paper, which means longer deliveries and higher costs. Only the largest presses have offset machines. Fairly good multi-colour printing only the more important presses can do. Printing an edition of, say, 10,000 Bibles gives our printers no small headache: storing the paper handily for the machines, the piling up of the printed sheets, folding and collating them, and packing the sheets ready for the bindery. The work of the printers must therefore be constantly supervised. But it is a joy to see what remarkably good results are achieved with the imperfect means at their disposal. Our Arabic 4th font New Testament with the red frame, printed by offset-process, is a very attractive little book. Also the recent edition of the large Modern-Armenian Bible with references printed from old plates shows a high grade of workmanship. Some of our printers are beginning to take pride in good workmanship.

Just as the Van Dyck Version of the Arabic Bible revolutionised Modern Arabic, the "new Arabic type" of Mr. Homan Hallock, the director of the American Press in Malta during the 1860's and collaborator of Dr. Eli Smith, marks the beginning of modern Arabic printing from type. The main problem when printing in Arabic is that the language can be written with and without vowels, or with the most necessary vowels only, especially for proper names in the Old Testament. Printing with or without vowels means a difference of almost 15% in the number of pages required for an Arabic Bible. When too small, Arabic letters tend to become blurred and indecipherable. Whereas an English Pocket Bible may have 60 lines on a page and still be readable, an Arabic Bible of the same size has only 30 lines, and that without vowels. An edition

of a real Arabic Pocket Bible is a problem which has not yet been satisfactorily solved, and perhaps never will. Only large Pulpit or Family Bibles can be printed with notes or references. At the last meeting of the Arabic Bible Revision Committee under the leadership of Dr. Eugene A. Nida of the American Bible Society it was decided that the new Bible should be printed with a limited number of notes and references in such a way that the page content in each book should be the same irrespective of its size. This presents a tremendous printing problem and would probably be solved only if a special new Arabic type is created.

But vowelled or unvowelled is not only a printing problem, it is also a theological problem in the Arabic world which is predominantly Muslim. Since the Koran is the word from God literally come down from heaven, it is clear that a mispronunciation of a word amounts to a sacrilege. No Koran is ever printed unvowelled. Vowels add to the sanctity of the book. For this reason the Catholic Press in Beirut will print its version of the Bible only in vowelled Arabic. Only the American Bible Society prints vowelled and unvowelled editions of the Bible, and voices can be heard which plead for an exclusively vowelled "Protestant" Bible.

All this has led to an unusually large variety of sizes of books. We have seven different sizes of Bibles, and five different sizes of New Testaments in Arabic, which is spoken only by a comparatively small minority of Arab Christians. It is clear that when the revised version of the Arabic Bible is completed, an effort must be made to reduce these variations.

Since Mr. Hallock invented "the new Arabic" type, more modern types have been developed. Our two small New Testaments and all our Gospel Portions are published in a new type that appeals more to the present-day reader. As mentioned above, a special type will have to be created if the decision of the Arabic Revision Committee is to be implemented.

No such problems exist with regard to the printing of Scriptures in the Armenian language. This is an Aryan language with distinct letters for each of its vowels and consonants.

The great masses of the people in the Near East are poor, incredibly poor sometimes. The question of price is therefore of immense importance if one of the basic principles of Bible Society work, namely, to offer the Scriptures at prices which the people can afford, is to be fulfilled. Cost of production must be kept as low as possible. But at the same time we want to produce a book that is attractive and a pleasure to handle. When the late Mr. Lyman MacCallum became the agency-secretary of the Bible Lands Agency North, he introduced colourful covers for our Gospel Portions with oriental floral designs from old tiles and book-covers, instead of the dull plain covers that had been used heretofore. Since then we have further developed this idea and almost all our Portions of the Old and New Testaments are produced with attractive covers which we change almost with every new edition.

When the work of the Arabic Revision Committee is finished, new editions of all Arabic Scriptures, Bibles, Testaments and Portions, will become necessary. This will be a great opportunity for introducing new features regarding type, arrangement of page-face, bindings, etc. It can be for the Bible Societies the occasion for another big step forward in the art of book production in the Near East.

News From All The World

Africa—East

Following the account in our last issue of the forthcoming opening of the new Bible House in Nairobi, a report on the occasion has now been received from the Rev. F. J. Bedford, the Bible Society Secretary for East Africa:

At the dedication service there was a crowd of nearly a thousand people present and these did not disperse in spite of the bursting of a torrential rainstorm just as the service was about to begin. There was a wonderful representation of people from every Protestant denomination in East Africa. One African had come over five hundred miles at his own expense to be present on this historic day, and greetings were received not only from every part of East Africa, but also from many parts of the world.

The service was conducted by the Secretary for East Africa, who spoke of the great significance of the opening of the first Bible House in East Africa and its importance to the whole development of these new countries. From this new building the Scriptures would be distributed in over fifty different languages to the African, Asian and European communities.

The actual act of dedication was performed by the Rt. Rev. R. Macpherson, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and Scriptures were read in English and Kiswahili. It was fitting that the second reading should be from the Union Swahili Bible, that classic version, which since its publication in 1952, has had such a profound effect on the peoples of East Africa. It was read by the Rt. Rev. Obadiah Kariuki, Assistant Bishop of Mombasa and himself a great opponent of the Mau Mau throughout the emergency.

The Secretary for East Africa, on behalf of the General Committee of the British & Foreign Bible Society, presented a specially bound and inscribed copy of the Bible to the Hon. W. F. Coutts, the Chief Secretary of Kenya, who had come to open the building. The distinguished guest gave a deeply moving address in which he paid a tribute to all those who had worked to make such a great day possible. He spoke of the continuing power and dynamic force of the Bible in modern society.

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony the great crowd, group by group, entered the buildings. They were thrilled to see the well-stocked shelves and the exhibition of Scriptures, some of them hundreds of years old, which had been specially arranged for the occasion.

On the lips of all were words of thanksgiving that at last a great task had been accomplished. For the first time in history a Bible House was built and opened in East Africa. This event is matched with stirring and changing times in Africa. A new era has begun and we pray that this new building will be a living bastion of truth in a changing society.

Argentina

The Advisory Council of the Bible Society Agency in Argentina has increased its activities and responsibilities. Meeting regularly it hears reports from the several work committees (Finance, Evangelism, Publicity, Translation and Publication), makes recommendations and gives advice to the administrative staff.

Many suggestions from the sub-committees, represented by their respective presidents on the Council, have proved to be extremely helpful and there is a growing enthusiasm among all groups.

Professor Santiago Canclini, leader of the local Baptist Convention, continues as President of the Advisory Council.

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Regional committees have been organised in several cities of the Republic. Correspondents and Bible workers are being related more closely and effectively to the regional committees, which in turn coordinate their activities with the central office in Buenos Aires.

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Senor Bronislaw Carvosky conducts excellent colportage work in the port of Buenos Aires. As a news vendor he has a special permit to sell among the dock workers and crews of the many ships which come from every part of the world. He not only sells Scriptures in many different languages but, having access to the ships, does a bit of missionary work as well. Customarily he inserts a Gospel portion in the books and magazines he sells.

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Another pioneer, using standard methods of colportage, is Senor Antonio Parisi, who is working a very difficult area at the extreme north of Argentina. Covering much of this sector by mule or "burro" back, he reaches remote villages which have never seen a Bible before. Churches have been organised around these groups of Bible readers. Senor Parisi's Christian spirit and consecration win many to the Cause.

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Mr. Thomas Mulder, the First Argentine graduate of the Penzotti Institute in Mexico, has begun his new programme of work. He is centred in Cordoba, a city now approaching a million inhabitants, and his work is from there to outlying districts. Pastors and laymen who worked in the activities directed by Mr. Mulder for Scripture sales and evangelism have been very enthusiastic in their reports about the work.

Mr. Mulder is being introduced to the churches of Rosario, Buenos Aires, and also to those in Uruguay, in order to interest other possible candidates for training in Mexico once the effectiveness of Mr. Mulder's method is realised.

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The Bible Agency in Argentina was fortunate in being able to secure spot advertising time immediately preceding and following the "Bible Quiz" sponsored by Israel as a part of its tenth anniversary celebration. The programme is transmitted by Radio Belgrano, which has international outreach. All questions are based on the Bible, and judges are a Jewish rabbi, a Catholic priest and a Protestant pastor. Each participant receives a copy of the Scriptures and the winner is to receive a trip to Israel. The programme has created a great deal of public interest in the Bible, and local Agency publicity before and after the programme has brought enquiries from all over the country from those who want to buy a Bible. The Evangelical constituency has been very congratulatory on the success of getting such excellent and opportune publicity.

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The Secretary of the La Plata Agency, Dr. Ivan H. Nothdurft, has made several visits to Uruguay and Paraguay recently, as well as to Argentine cities, reorganising the regional committees and forming a new advisory council in Uruguay.

The Uruguayan council is composed of 14 members, representing 9 denominational groups at work in that country. The Rev. Emilio Castro is president of the council.

Brazil

Work has been started on a 300,000 line concordance in Portuguese. This work is under the direction of Professor Schelp, who has taken a leading part in the revision of the Portuguese Bible, recently completed. The American Bible Society is covering the cost of the project, which is expected to be completed during the course of the coming months. A 45,000-line concordance has already been established and is to be included in some Bible editions.

Canada

The 1957 report, just published, of the work of the *British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada*, records that the work of welcoming new immigrants to Canada, arriving at Halifax, Saint John, Quebec and Montreal, with a gift of a Gospel (occasionally a Bible or New Testament), has continued. Of the 10,800 newcomers greeted in this way 5,700 were Hungarian refugees. 251 Bibles, 146 New Testaments and 818 Gospels were also presented to this special group of new arrivals by auxiliaries across the country.

In any account of presentations to immigrants landing in Canada, the report continues, reference ought to be made to the work of Mrs. J. Arthur Long at the Port of Saint John, New Brunswick. Mrs. Long is over 80 years of age but never fails to greet every passenger ship that arrives. Gospels are offered in 28 languages and this welcome makes a deep impression upon those arriving to take up life in Canada. The Bible Society has been most fortunate to have such a gracious Christian lady as Mrs. Long engaged in this work for so many years.

England

On the occasion of the Lambeth Conference, the B.F.B.S. organised three evening receptions, followed by a lecture. Each was attended by a hundred or more bishops and other guests and staff members.

Professor C. H. Dodd, chairman of the Joint Committee on New Translation of the Bible, spoke on the first evening on the principles and progress of the present work of the new English translation, illustrating his talk with several quotations of passages from the Old Testament as well as from the New Testament. He indicated that three or four years were still needed before the New Testament would be on sale, and at least eight or nine before the whole Bible would be available.

The speaker on the second occasion was Professor G. D. Kilpatrick, of Queen's College, Oxford, who commented upon the new B.F.B.S. edition of the Ancient Greek New Testament, in the preparation of which he himself had had the major part. Professor Kilpatrick also indicated the importance of this publication in relation to the present development of international scholarly work on the Greek text.

On the last evening the General Secretaries of the B.F.B.S. shared with their guests some of the problems and challenges faced by the Society in the present day.

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The British and Foreign Bible Society has just published 1,000 copies of its new Greek-English diglot of the Gospel of Mark, for the use of translators. The work was prepared by a panel of missionary translators and scholars in Great Britain.

A similar diglot of the Gospel of Matthew is also ready for press. Work on John is in its final stages, and is in process on the Epistles. The whole New Testament will be published in three to four years' time.

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In its annual report for 1957, the Scripture Gift Mission, London, reports the distribution of booklets, leaflets, copies of the Scripture in 191 countries and islands. This included 22,700 Bibles, 112,300 New Testaments, 1,075,000 Gospels, 635,000 Bible Selections (40 - 200 pages), 4,110,000 Scripture booklets and 4,690,000 leaflets, text-cards and posters. It is also reported that 125 new editions and revisions in 81 languages were issued.

Germany

Two pastors from Frankfurt spent four weeks earlier this year on a camping mission, on behalf of the Hesse-Nassau Church and the Union of Pastoral Healing. They went by car, with their tents, along the shores of the Adriatic, from Pescara to Grado near Trieste.

A report of their journey in the Evangelischer Pressedienst (No. 35) states: "They were especially surprised at the great hunger for reading on the part of the holiday-makers. Although the pastors had a whole trunk full of Scriptures, they could have distributed many more. On Sundays they held morning services in front of the tent. Their clerical gowns that they had taken with them were left in the cases; the pastors spoke in shorts and sports shirts. The organ music was replaced by the sound of the waves. Up to half of the holiday campers came to listen. One woman said, 'My husband has come to a service for the first time for 20 years—and entirely voluntarily'."

Hungary

In the current year the Old Testament scholars participating in the work of the *Hungarian Bible Council's* Commission on the Translation of the Bible, have come together regularly once a month in Budapest for a week's work. The trial edition of the Book of Job has just come off the press. The notes to this book were prepared by Dr. Miklos Palfy, Professor of the Lutheran Theological Academy of Budapest. The translation of the Psalms, the Song of Songs and the Proverbs has been completed and good progress has been made on other books, since through the United Bible Societies a special subsidy was granted to enable the Hungarian Bible Council to arrange a month's retreat in June, during which members of the Old Testament Commission devoted all their time to the work of Bible Translation. Conducted by Professor Dr. Laszlo Pakozdy of Debrecen, General Secretary of the Bible Council, the translators pursued their work in the pastors' summer resort of the Hungarian Reformed Church at Matrahaza.

Iceland

When attending the U.B.S. Regional Conference near Oslo (see below), the Rt. Rev. Asmundur Gudmundsson, Bishop of Iceland and Chairman of the *Icelandic Bible Society*, reported on the history and work of his Society. After a first period when the Bible Society (founded in 1815) printed its own edition, it depended for over a century on the B.F.B.S. for its Scripture supplies. In 1956, however, the Icelandic Bible Society resumed its own production and published an edition of 5,000 New Testaments, illustrated with pictures from the B.F.B.S. Jubilee Bible, the blocks of which had been graciously supplied by London. More recently, on plates passed on by London, the Icelandic Bible Society has also produced a large-size Bible (5,000 copies).

A commission is at present revising the translation of the New Testament and corrections are also being introduced into the text of the Old Testament, although the work is not in the nature of a fully-fledged revision. It is planned to issue the revised New Testament and corrected Old Testa-

ment in a new edition for the celebration of the Third Jubilee of the Icelandic Bible Society (1965).

Korea

The Rev. Young Bin Im, General Secretary of the *Korean Bible Society*, reports that he has made a translation of "A Book in His Hand", by Dr. A. M. Chirgwin, which he believes will make valuable reading for the colporteurs of his Society.

Peru

Circulation of Scriptures in Peru for the six months ending April 30, 1958, amounted to 6,598 Bibles, 4,529 Testaments and 67,331 Portions, a total of 78,458 volumes. This compares with 69,486 copies distributed during the same period of 1957, and 136,471 books for the twelve months ending last October.

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In May of 1958, the North Andean Joint Agency of the A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. printed in Lima a revised edition of St. Mark's Gospel in the Cuzco dialect of Quechua. This edition, the text of which is considered only as tentative, consisted of 1,000 copies, and represents the first book of the New Testament to be printed in its revised form. Half of this entire edition was sold to brethren attending a convention and preachers' retreat in Sicuani, southern Peru, early in July, and it is expected that the remaining copies will be disposed of without difficulty. It is anticipated that other books, possibly Acts and Romans, will follow shortly, and that the basic text of the whole New Testament will be completed within another two years. Mr. Leslie Hoggarth, of the Evangelical Union of South America, is undertaking this important work, with the valued help of two national informants. This dialect, which is usually considered to be the original Quechua and that used by the ancient Incas, is to-day still spoken by well over one million Indians, the majority of them being monolingual.

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Through the generosity of a friend of the Society, a missionary now on furlough, the North Andean Agency has been given the use of a station wagon during his absence from the country. Since June, 1958, this vehicle has been made available to one of our veteran colporteurs who has recently secured his professional driver's licence and who, by means of this improved method of transportation, is now able to visit places which otherwise would be completely isolated, so far as the colporteur is concerned. On one of his first journeys to such a village, he reports having met a family composed of husband, wife and son, who with manifest joy immediately received the Book into their home, and Him whose life the Book records, into their hearts.

Portugal

Mr. Guido Waldemar Oliveira, President of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance, reports on biblical editions that are being printed and circulated by several Roman Catholic agencies in that country: single Gospels, volumes with the four Gospels, or a harmony of the same, the Acts, other illustrated biblical editions, and a large-size illustrated New Testament of a new translation from the original tongue, made by a canon who is professor at the Roman Catholic Seminary of Olivais, on the outskirts of Lisbon. All these are issued by the Franciscan friars, the Capucins, Catholic Action, Paulists and the last by a secular publisher of Oporto, the second city of the country. There are also two handy editions of the whole Bible published by the Paulists and printed in Brazil.

"Now", writes Mr. Oliveira, "another venture is being launched, namely the so-called 'Poliglot Portuguese Bible', which aims at giving a translation in Portuguese, in parallel columns, of the fundamental biblical books, such as the Masoretic Hebraic Old Testament, the Septuagint, the Clementine Latin Vulgate, etc., to which will be added some notes or aids. This will be published in periodical issues. The first one, consisting of 68 pages, size 16.8cm. by 24.8cm., has just come off the press, the price being Escudos 15$00. The average price will be Escudos 12$50 per 48 pages. This first part offers good general introductions to the old manuscripts and the so-called fundamental biblical books.

"The author of this work, Mr. A. Dias Gomes, was formerly known as a pastor of the Seventh-Day Adventist group in Lisbon."

Mr. Oliveira also reports that a series of public lectures on the Bible and biblical matters, were given in Lisbon last spring by a Dominican friar. These lectures took place in a large hall connected with the Lisbon Higher Technical Institute (of Engineering). Big crowds filled the hall to capacity every evening.

"At any rate, there was a good result from all these lectures, as the Dominican friar urged all Roman Catholics to buy and read the Bible (their own Roman Catholic editions, of course) and to accept the Bible as 'the loving letter from our Heavenly Father to His human children' ".

Rhodesia

The following extracts come from a recent newsletter written by the Rev. Maynard and Mrs. Booth, of the B.F.B.S. Agency in Southern Rhodesia:

Many of us feel that the churches and missions must re-examine their policies and methods for these times so that the African Church can be prepared to propagate itself and stand on its own feet, if necessary. Admitted that the Africans do not have the same background and training that most of us have and will not be able to do things just the way we would do them. But, for the future of the Christian Church here, we are coming to believe that it must become more African and not so much the white man's church, religion, book and even Christ. In one part of Rhodesia there is a proposed union being discussed between some African churches and some European churches. It looks quite possible that it is already 'too late' and that the plan will be turned down by the Africans who are saying: 'We are not interested in an organizational union; if it is not to be a union in fellowship, we are not interested'. It must be admitted that there are few European churches that welcome Africans to their services; some churches tolerate a few Africans, but fewer yet really welcome them. Are we going to wait until it is too late all along the line? Do pray for Africa, that her leaders, both African and European, may be wisely guided, that we may find a mutual path before the whole situation erupts in bitterness and bloodshed, and that the church may be effective in this situation. And yet, in the midst of all this tension and crisis, this growing feeling of a volcano about to erupt, there is this astounding demand for the Word of God with which we just cannot keep pace. If we could only have the supplies so that the African church can be really grounded in God's Word for the time of trial that is surely coming upon it. Between the pressures of his pagan neighbours and of the African nationalists (the extreme Black-Nationalism), the African Christian is already feeling the squeeze and needs our prayers . . . .

A group of mission stations has had a special 'giving' for the Bible Society with magnificent results.

From eight mission stations and their village churches they have sent in a gift of £300 ! Now when you stop to think of the average income of the African—not to mention the salary of missionaries—you just stand in amazement at this contribution. One missionary gave up a subscription to a magazine and sent in that amount for the Bible Society. A school of missionary children took up an offering and sent in over £7. They must have sacrificed most of their spending money for some time to do this. And so you see we are not just sitting waiting for England, Canada and America to do the job for us but our people are learning the joy of sharing also.

Spain

A visitor to the island of Palma (Majorca) last spring makes the following statement in "L'Etoile du Matin", No. 129:

"The presence of Protestantism in the island is evident indirectly in quite an unexpected way, as indeed it is in other parts of Spain. We were able to see posters on the walls of Palma, which attracted and intrigued us: 'A book twenty centuries old and yet the most relevant for to-day: the Gospel'. 'Not a single family without a copy of the Gospel'.

"Who could have put up such posters, since all propaganda by Protestants is forbidden? Indeed, it was the Roman Catholic Church which had had these posters displayed, on the occasion of 'La semaine de l'évangile' (Bible Week).

"The Catholics also arrange a 'Journée de la Bible' (Bible Day), but it is because there are Protestants in Spain that the Roman Catholic Church recommends the reading of the Scriptures (under certain conditions), for it does not wish the Bible to remain the prerogative of the Protestants.

"What is more, this effort is very necessary, for the Gospel is very little known. A devoted Catholic woman, having read these posters, asked one of her Protestant friends naively: 'But what is the Gospel? Is it the story of our Lord? Where could I obtain a copy?' 'Ask your priest', replied the Protestant, who would have been happy to give her a copy, but who knows that 'Protestant Gospels' are prohibited in Spain".

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A limited edition of a small year book entitled 'La Biblia en el Mundo', has been published in Spain for distribution among members of the Evangelical Church. The main article in it is by Sr. Flores, B.F.B.S. Agent in Madrid, who gives a lively account of his visit to Europe earlier this year. In it he manages to weave a good deal of information about Bible Society work in the countries he visited, including an account of the B.F.B.S. Annual Meeting and a description of the Brussels Exhibition and of the place of the Bible Societies in it. Other articles include one by the Rev. E. H. Robertson on 'The Biblical Revival in Roman Catholicism', on Bible Day in Spain and on translations of the Bible. The booklet also includes a number of photographs, some of a Bible exhibition in Madrid, and several taken on the occasion of the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Bible House, London.

Thailand

About twenty-five missionaries from six missionary societies, representing nine tribal languages or dialects besides Thai, met in Chiengmai, Thailand, earlier this year, under the auspices of the American Bible Society and Thailand Bible House. The purpose of the conference was: "To give help to those missionaries who have begun, or are anticipating work among the tribal people in their linguistic analysis and various translation problems".

The theme of the conference was "Translation as Communication". In several lectures Dr. William A. Smalley, Associate Secretary for Translations of the American Bible Society, discussed with the group the problems involved in translating the Scriptures in such a way that their meaning gets across clearly to the reader. Both the linguistic and the anthropological implications of the problem were pointed out.

Special attention was given to working out a new system of Thailand tribal orthography. Some language groups have already started using romanized orthography, others are getting to the point of choosing the best orthography, while others have not settled all their linguistic difficulties and therefore not yet faced the orthography question. Lao is the trade language for many of the tribes, but it is clear that the Thai language will in time be the one in general use. The adaptation of Thai orthography to the tribal languages is not easy, since Thai has an ingenious but cumbersome "three-level orthography". So far the Suay, Miao and Pwo Karen tribes are making the adaptation to Thai orthography and are testing it in those areas.

Other topics discussed included the problem of creating a "reading appetite" among the tribal peoples, who often have no sense of need for reading. The missionaries there have the task of trying to provide appropriate primers, readers, teaching and such a flow of reading matter as will keep the reader interested as well as edifying him.

United States of America

The 150th anniversary of the founding of the Pennsylvania Bible Society has just been celebrated. This Society now works as an Auxiliary of the *American Bible Society*, and the latter held its Annual Meeting in Philadelphia last May, in honour of the occasion.

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Eight years ago the American Bible Society started a chain reaction in California that is spreading to other parts of the country. This is the placing of containers that hold free copies of Scripture Portions in bus stations and hospitals. One new modern hospital willingly consented to place a rack in the waiting room on each of its five floors. Although each rack contains one hundred Scripture Portions, most of them have to be refilled every two weeks. Some locations are so strategic, that Scripture replacements are needed every week.

*

The year 1957 marked the introduction by the A.B.S. of the Finger Phono, a small hand-operated phonograph to be supplied with Scripture recordings for certain tribes and peoples where the rate of literacy is very low. On the reservation of the Navajo Indians in New Mexico and Arizona there are now one thousand machines, each with six eight-inch Navajo records and each serving a vital need among this growing tribe of original Americans. Records have also been processed for the following languages and countries: Mazahua (Mexico), Kekchi (Guatemala), Spanish (Latin America), Gio (Liberia), Kpelle (Liberia), Marathi (India).

*

During the past decade and a half the A.B.S. has published Scripture Portions in over thirty Indian languages of Mexico, including a complete New Testament in Tzeltal for Indians of that tribe. The Bible Society has the manuscript for a complete New Testament for the Chol Indians in the hands of the printer, and is also being called upon to publish New Testaments in several other Mexican-Indian dialects.

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In the last ten years, the A.B.S. reports, due to great improvements in the appearance of its editions of

pocket Gospels and other Scripture Portions, the total distribution of these small books has been over 75,000,000 copies in sixteen languages. This figure does not include the wide circulation by the Bible Society of whole Bibles and complete copies of the New Testament.

*

The American Bible Society has prepared one of its missionary volumes of the Scripture (Authorized Version) in an attractive two-piece binding, with spine in maroon and cover in off-white leatherette, on which the words "Holy Bible" have been stamped in gold. This new and modern-looking Bible, the Bible Society feels, will make a special appeal to to-day's youth for use in high school and college, for confirmation and graduation or hospital use.

*

A.B.S. work in Latin America (from Mexico southwards) has expanded considerably during the past ten years. During that period annual circulation has increased from nearly three million volumes to nearly four million. Staff has increased from nine to sixteen. The Penzotti Institute has been established and the Haiti Agency organised. Numerous new Indian dialect publications have been produced and several new items published in Spanish. The A.B.S. appropriation for the area has increased from $152,000 to $354,000. A new Bible House has been built in Buenos Aires. The church is growing rapidly in several areas, and economic, political and religious changes are so frequent and drastic that one must be constantly listening and reading to keep abreast of the times for the 23 republics and territories.

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In connection with the Baptist Year of Evangelism during 1959, the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention has ordered from the A.B.S. one million Gospels of John in a special cover, to be distributed widely by members of Southern Baptist churches. The words "New Life for You", which embody the theme of this special Year of Evangelism, will be printed together with an attractive design on the front cover. The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board will accomplish the distribution of these books through the 46 Southern Baptist bookstores.

As a special help to the Southern Baptist State Secretaries of Evangelism who will be promoting the distribution and effective use of these books, the A.B.S. National Distribution Department is supplying sufficient copies of this Gospel and a specially-prepared folder, entitled "The Power of the Portion", to mail to every Southern Baptist church in the U.S.A. and to be distributed to fall conferences.

Miscellaneous

The following are the resolutions passed by the Lambeth Conference on the subject of the Bible:

The Conference affirms its belief that the Bible discloses the truths about the relation of God and Man which are the key of the world's predicament and is therefore deeply relevant to the modern world.

The Conference affirms that our Lord Jesus Christ is God's final Word to man, and that in His light all Holy Scripture must be seen and interpreted, the Old Testament in terms of Promise and the New Testament in terms of Fulfilment.

The Conference affirms that Jesus Christ lives in his Church through the Holy Spirit according to his promise, and that the Church is therefore both guardian and interpreter of Holy Scripture; nevertheless the Church may teach nothing as "necessary for eternal salvation but what may be concluded and proved by the Scripture".

The Conference gratefully acknowledges our debt to the host of devoted scholars who, worshipping the God of Truth, have enriched and deepened our understanding of the Bible, not least by facing with intellectual integrity the questions raised by modern knowledge and modern criticism. It also acknowledges the Church's debt to the men and women in our universities, colleges and schools who by their teaching and example inspire new generations to love the Scriptures.

The Conference welcomes every sign of the revival of Bible Study within the common life of the Church. It calls on all Church people to re-establish the habit of Bible reading at home, and commends the growing practice of group Bible study.

The Conference affirms the importance of preaching, both evangelistic and expository, ministered as a means of grace, by men who have experienced the power of the Gospel in their own lives.

The Conference acknowledges gratefully the work of scientists in increasing man's knowledge of the universe, wherein is seen the majesty of God in his creative activity. It therefore calls upon Christian people both to learn reverently from every new disclosure of truth, and at the same time to bear witness to the Biblical message of a God and Saviour apart from whom no gift can be rightly used.

In view of the lack of understanding which can develop in consequence of the different thought and language of the Bible and the modern world, the Conference urges Christian scholars and leaders to co-operate with men of science and other kinds of modern learning in the study of their respective modes of thought and speech.

The Conference believes that the presentation of the message of the Bible to the world requires great sensitiveness to the outlook of the people of to-day, and urges that imaginative use be made of all the resources of literature, art, music and drama, and of new techniques appealing to eye as well as to ear.

The Conference welcomes the new translations of the Scriptures in many languages, and would encourage our people to give all possible support to those societies whose concern is the distribution of the Scriptures to all lands. Much still remains to be done in this field and the need is urgent.

In the light of the previous eleven resolutions the Conference invites the Churches of the Anglican Communion to engage in a special effort during the next ten years to extend the scope and deepen the quality of personal and corporate study of the Bible.

United Bible Societies

The Rev. T. Miyakoda, Secretary of the *Japan Bible Society*, represented the U.B.S. at the 14th World Christian Education and Sunday School Convention, held from August 6-13 in Tokyo. He has sent the following report about the Convention:

Meetings were held at Aoyama Gakuin University and were attended by 4,500 delegates, 1,500 from abroad and 3,000 Japanese. Every night large gatherings were held in the Tokyo Sports Arena near the University, attended by from 7,000 to 12,000 people.

According to the General Secretary, Dr. Nelson Chappel, sixty-four countries had sent delegates to the Convention, which was the largest held by the WCCESSA in terms of numbers of delegates and nationalities represented.

Fraternal delegates were introduced and presented greetings at the second evening meeting. Before Bishop Dibelius made his speech, when there were more than 10,000 people at the

Sports Arena, I was introduced as the delegate of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, and I was able to convey the greetings of the U.B.S. to the Convention.

Before the Convention, the Executive meeting of the WCCE was held in Atami Hotspring for four days. Dr. Nelson Chappel specially invited a few of the fraternal delegates to that meeting and gave them the opportunity of making reports on the work of their organisations. I was able to give quite a detailed report on the U.B.S. and on the work of the Japan Bible Society. The U.B.S. BULLETIN No. 35 arrived a few days before I went to the Atami meeting and I could therefore give them the latest statistics of Bible Society Scripture distribution in the world. I was asked many questions concerning Bible Society work at this meeting. It came as a surprise to the 250 Executive members present to learn that the Japan Bible Society distributed 1,800,000 copies of the Scriptures in 1957, and that the total number handled by the Society since the war was over 22,000,000 copies, especially when they remembered that there are only 600,000 Christians among Japan's population of 90,000,000.

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From August 3-13 about eighty young people from eight different European national Bible Societies came together in Haus Landskron near Villach, Austria, for the first International Bible Society Youth Conference to be held in the history of the Bible Societies. The Conference was organised by the Youth Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Netherlands Bible Societies, the Rev. B. J. Tidball and Mr. R. van Holst Pellekaan respectively, and was held under the auspices of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, its General Secretary and Madame Béguin serving as host and hostess. Local arrangements were made by Herr Uhl, secretary of the B.F.B.S. Agency in Vienna, with the help of various members of his family.

Bible study groups were organised in the four languages of the Conference—Dutch, English, French and German. The addresses were delivered in plenary sessions and translations provided for those unable to follow the speaker in his mother tongue. Professor R. Martin-Achard gave two papers on the Bible, the Word of God, its history, its actuality. Staff members of the British and Dutch Societies and of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES spoke on the problems of our world to-day, and on the history and present problems and tasks of the Bible Society movement.

Discussions (in three languages!), films, outings, sports and games in the afternoons offered many occasions for exchange of views and experiences, and for gaining mutual knowledge and a deeper understanding of Bible Society work.

For many of the delegates, with the exception of the British and Dutch, this Conference offered a first contact with the Bible Society world and service. Several very positive testimonies coming from such quarters convinced the organisers that the results of the Conference had been worth the effort. Concrete proposals were made by the participants themselves regarding steps to be taken for furthering interest in and support of Bible Society work in their own countries, particularly in areas where the work is little known. The organisation of local cells and national conferences and the organisation a few years hence of other international Bible Society Youth Conferences, were unanimously recommended.

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The ninth edition of *Index Translationum*, an international bibliography of translations, published by

UNESCO, appeared early this year. On the basis of information contained in this year-book, the UNESCO 'Courier' published, in its issue of April, 1958, a table of the world's "most translated authors". Many who saw the table were surprised to see that the Bible, so often referred to as "the world's most translated book", took only sixth place, the authors preceding it being Lenin, Jules Verne, Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky and Mickey Spillane.

The U.B.S. made a close examination of the sources from which UNESCO obtained the information on which to base its statistics, and found that although each country had a central organisation supplying to UNESCO the relevant information regarding translations and publications in that country, in most cases the publications of the Bible Societies had been entirely omitted from the figures quoted. In view of this, the U.B.S. sent a note to the Ecumenical Press Service, the substance of which appeared in its issue of 6th June last. This information was subsequently quoted in *The Times* (London) and in other journals.

At the same time, the General Secretary of the U.B.S., at the suggestion of the Editor of the UNESCO 'Courier' has prepared a letter setting out the position, for inclusion in the 'Courier'. This letter reads as follows:

Dear Sir,

Readers of the UNESCO 'Courier' will perhaps have been surprised to see, in reading the issue of April 1958, that the Bible—so often claimed to be the book translated into the greatest number of languages—only took sixth place in the statistics of published translations, on the basis of documentation supplied by *Index Translationum*.

A careful examination of the sources of information on which these statistics are based enables one to see that simply to add up the translations mentioned in the various national lists can lead to an erroneous interpretation of the situation as it really is.

First, it is to be noted that apart from four countries, the publications of the Bible Societies have been completely overlooked, even in countries like Great Britain and the United States of America, where Scriptures are published each year in numerous languages. Moreover, in the case of any author, each publication of any of his works in translation, whether book or pamphlet, counts as a unit. In the case of Lenin, for example, who comes at the head of the table brought to our attention for 1956, the figure of 331 does not mean that the works of Lenin in whole or in part were translated and published in 331 different languages during 1956, but simply that in 1956 there were 331 editions of works of Lenin published (whether whole books or pamphlets) as either first editions or reprints, the number of different languages in which they appeared not being taken into account. In fact, according to the same lists of *Index Translationum*, the number of languages in which translations of the works of Lenin were published that year was only 14. In the same year the whole Bible was published in about 60 languages and New Testaments or Portions of the Bible in a further 110 languages. We have therefore no reason to doubt at the moment that this figure remains the highest ever attained by any book, as far as the number of languages in which a work has appeared is concerned.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

OLIVIER BÉGUIN,

General Secretary.

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As announced in the previous issue of the BULLETIN, the U.B.S. Regional Conference of the Scandinavian Bible Societies took place in "Hurdal Verk", a missionary conference centre north of Oslo, from August 18-21. It was attended by about forty delegates from the four Scandinavian Societies, by the chairman of the Icelandic Bible Society, Bishop Gudmundsson and by representatives of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Netherlands Bible Society, the Union of Bible Societies in Germany and by the secretaries of the United Bible Societies. The main concern of the meeting was the desire of the Scandinavian Societies themselves to reconsider their own activities at home and their participation in

the world-wide task. This led to a three-fold approach in the programme. First, careful attention was paid in addresses and group discussion to the aims, structure and present activities of the Scandinavian Bible Societies, and Mr. J. J. Kijne reported on the set-up of the Netherlands Bible Society. Second, the needs of the world and the present responsibilities of the Bible Societies, the degree of their cooperation in the U.B.S., were brought to the attention of the Scandinavian delegates by Dr. Cockburn of the B.F.B.S., by Dr. F. Birkeli, General Secretary of the Norwegian Missionary Society and by the General Secretary of the U.B.S. Third, studies on the relevance and use of the Bible by Prof. R. Josefson and Bishop Rosenquist, and an exposé by the Rev. E. H. Robertson underlined the responsibility of the Bible Societies to encourage and to help the churches to encourage the proper use of the Scripture by Christians at home. In the evenings Bible Society films and filmstrips were shown.

No findings were produced by the conference. But in the closing sessions, where the groups reported on their discussions, complete unanimity emerged in the expression of the necessity felt by the representatives of the various countries to convey to their respective committee and board members the new insights gained at the conference and their conviction that energetic steps should be taken by the Societies, which would enable them to meet more adequately the needs and challenge of the day. The main result of the meeting has been to help towards the creation of a new climate in Scandinavia with regard to Bible Society activities and to extend to a wider group of Bible Society supporters the general concerns of all those involved in the world fellowship of the U.B.S. One may expect concrete results to appear through the decisions of the various boards in their forthcoming meetings.

Bishop Berggrav, the former U.B.S. President, honoured the meeting by his presence on the last day and by delivering, at the closing service, one of those inspired addresses from which U.B.S. meetings have so often benefitted.

Unfortunately Archbishop Salomies, one of the U.B.S. Vice-Presidents, who was to have chaired the meeting, was prevented from coming by an accident which caused him to break a leg.

The Rev. A. Hauge, General Secretary of the Norwegian Bible Society, and his colleagues were responsible on behalf of the U.B.S., for the perfect running of the conference, which greatly contributed to its positive results.

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Two factual surveys have been prepared recently at the headquarters of the U.B.S. for its member Societies, regarding the state of Scripture translation in the world.

From these surveys it is evident that although Scriptures have appeared in whole or part in 1,127 languages up to the end of 1957 (Bibles 215; New Testaments 269; Portions 643), during the past twenty years they have only been published in about 660 languages: Bibles 170; New Testaments 190; Portions 300, in round figures.

There are various reasons which account for the fact that no edition of the Scripture was issued in the nearly 470 languages in which there had been publication previously; for instance, a number of dialects have become obsolete or are being gradually replaced by linguae francae, or by related languages; the political situation has also rendered production and distribution impossible in several areas of the world, translation progress has slowed down in areas of slow missionary advance where the turnover of books is very limited.

The surveys also revealed that of linguistic groups counting a million or more people, over forty do not yet possess the whole Bible in their language and half of them have not even a New Testament. Bibles or Testaments are planned and work on them is in progress in about half of these languages. Reasons similar to those mentioned above prevent the development of comparable plans in the case of the others. None of these languages, however, is completely without at least a complete Gospel.

Similarly only two groups among those numbering between 500,000 and one million have no part of the Scripture in their own language, though a dozen have less than a New Testament and a New Testament but no complete Bible. For the latter group, however, at least translation of 11 Bibles is in process of being completed.

Among the linguistic groups numbering between a quarter and half a million, and between 100,000 and 250,000, over thirty and fifty respectively are without whole New Testaments—no survey having been made for the whole Bible.

A list of languages spoken by groups of from 75,000 to half a million in which no part of the Scripture has been published yet is in preparation.

At present plans are being implemented for the completion of over 50 new Bibles and 40 new New Testaments and for the revision of 30 complete Bibles and nearly 50 New Testaments.

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